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ABSTRACT

This practicum was designed to ensure that junior high students with learning disabilities experience a successful transition back into the regular classroom from the resource room. The focus was on increasing communication between the regular classroom teacher and the resource room teacher, evaluating transition candidates using a competency-based criterion before they exit from the resource room, and establishing support services for the regular classroom teacher and the transition student. The practicum involved the development of a transition procedure as part of the student's individualized education plan, a written communication flowchart, teacher responsibilities (regular classroom and resource room), modified resource room schedule, student profile, possible regular classroom modifications, daily and weekly assessment, and inclusion of regular classroom teachers at special education meetings. Analysis of the data revealed that successful transitioning occurred following the practicum implementation. Student improvement occurred in the completion of regular classroom assignments and homework assignments, positive classroom behavior, and passing grades. Appendices contain copies of questionnaires and other practicum project materials. (Contains 22 references.) (JDD)

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Improving the Transition Process for Middle School Learning Disabled Students Reentering the Regular Classroom Through Student Accountability and Teacher Inservice Training

by

Dennis A. deNomme

Cluster 52a

A Practicum I Report Presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

1994

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL

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Approval:

8-18-94

Date of Final Approval of Report

Mary W. Staggs, Ed.D.

Dr. Mary Staggs, Adviser

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ABSTRACT

Improving the Transition Process for Middle School Learning Disabled Students Reentering the Regular Classroom through Student Accountability and Teacher Inservice Training. deNomme, Dennis A., 1994: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed. D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood. Descriptors: Transition/Mainstream/Special Education/Middle School/Learning Disability/Competency-Based Assessment/Resource Room/Multidisciplinary Team/Individualized Education Plan/Modifications/Regular Classroom/Inservice Training/Intervention.

This practicum was designed to ensure that junior high learning disabled students receive a successful transition back into the regular classroom from the resource room. The focus was on increasing communication between the regular classroom teacher and the resource room teacher, evaluating transition candidates using a competency-based criterion before they exit from the resource room, and established support services for the regular classroom teacher and transition student. Data for this practicum was taken from current literature that revealed before successful transitioning can take place transition procedures need to be developed. Additional data was obtained from the regular classroom teacher concerning their overall understanding of the school's current special education procedures, learning disabilities and related deficits, and Federal legislation that relates to learning disabled students.

The writer developed a transition procedure; written communication flowchart; flowchart definitions; teacher responsibilities (regular classroom and resource room); modified resource room schedule; student profile; daily and weekly evaluation assessment; and a special invitation inviting the regular classroom teachers to special education meetings.

Analysis of the data revealed successful transitioning occurred following the practicum implementation. Student improvement occurred in the completion of regular classroom assignments, homework assignments, and positive classroom behavior. Additional results revealed an improvement in the number of midterm failing notices submitted by regular classroom teachers and a marked improvement towards passing grades on report cards.

Permission Statement

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The community and school where this practicum was implemented are located in the southwestern United States. This small rural community sits at the foot of a large mountain range at an altitude of 4500 feet. The community is not supported by local manufacturing or farming therefore residents rely on a larger nearby metropolitan area for employment. The community itself is not experiencing rapid growth but recent development in the area poses the chance of increased population and expanding industry. The socioeconomic composition of the community is typical of many other small rural communities in the region. The community's population consists of 4,700 residents with an ethnic breakdown of 60% Anglo-American and 40% Hispanic.

The writer's school district is certified as an elementary district and consists of two campuses. The preschool and kindergarten grades are on the primary campus and the first through eighth grade is on the junior high campus. The current enrollment for both campuses is just over 400 students. The school district pays tuition to two nearby high schools for 256 students in grades 9 through 12. The nearby rural high school serves 148 of the high school students while 108 attend a metropolitan high school. The district experiences some fluctuation in student enrollment each year. Approximately 30 students enroll

and exit the district each year keeping the overall enrollment consistent from year to year. In fact, many tenured teachers have taught second and third generation students.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer's work setting is located on the junior high campus. The administrative structure of the campus is comparable to other small rural school districts in that it consists of one principal for all campus administration. A fulltime psychologist handles all student supportive services including student counseling, liaison for student services, testing coordinator, administering psychoeducational evaluations, and acts as the administrator in the absence of the campus principal. Between the two campuses there are twenty-seven certified teachers for regular classroom instruction and seven teachers for the special student population. Six fulltime aides assist the special student population teachers to meet the needs of the students and their teachers.

The school district's mission statement outlines the district's philosophy and its encouragement towards parental involvement in the school's day-to-day activities. The mission statement also places an emphasis on every child's inherent right to learn. This commitment to learning is evident in the teacher and student ratio. The average class size is one teacher to twenty-two students. Another reflection of the district's commitment to learning is witnessed by the number of active parent volunteers in the district. Today, 41 participants

volunteer varying amounts of their time each week.

At the junior high level, special education functions on a resource room schedule. The resource room currently has one fulltime special education teacher certified in emotionally handicapped and learning disabled. One full-time teacher's aide assists the teacher and students with day-to-day activities. The current daily enrollment in the junior high resource room is fourteen students from grades sixth through eighth. Each student attends the resource room daily for either math, reading or language or any combination of the three areas depending on his or her deficiency. For grades fourth through sixth there is one fulltime special education teacher who serves the gifted students and learning disabled students. Grades first through third also has one fulltime special education teacher and a fulltime teacher's aide. Instruction for students in the preschool, preschool handicapped program, and kindergarten is provided on the primary campus located across town. Other special areas provided for by the district includes a Chapter I reading specialist, English as a second language (ESL) specialist, and speech and language specialist. All the special programs are supported fully and with enthusiasm from the district level administration to the students.

The writer has an extensive background in education that includes classroom experience and specialized certification. The writer currently holds a Bachelor of Science in Education Degree and a Master of Science in Education Degree. Each degree is in the area of special education and industrial arts

education. The writer has used the combination of the two degreed areas extensively in most professional experiences. Each degreed area was chosen particularly to support the field of working with handicapped children and young adults from education through vocational training and work placement. During the first five years of post-college employment the writer worked as the director of a rehabilitation facility and a private school. Following the directorship, the writer relocated to the sunbelt region of southwestern United States. Following relocation, the writer returned to school and accumulated sixty hours of continuing education beyond the Master's degree. The continuing education was directed towards obtaining certification in learning disabilities and school administration. The writer is currently in the second year of a doctoral program for Child and Youth Studies specializing in special services and exceptional children.

The writer has been in the field of special education for the past 22 years. The first five year's experience was with private and state-sponsored special education programs for high school age students and adult vocational educational training. The majority of the student population during those years was classified as either educable mentally handicapped (EMH), trainable mentally handicapped (TMH), or multiple handicapped (MH). The remaining 17 year's experience has been with public school programs for special education students ranging from kindergarten to the twelfth grade.

The writer is certified in three educational areas: (1) administration

(principal for kindergarten through twelfth grade), (2) special education (learning disabled and emotionally disabled), and (3) regular education (industrial arts education for kindergarten through twelfth grade).

The writer's current professional responsibility within the work setting encompasses more than teaching junior high special education. The writer's primary role deals directly with teaching junior high special education students in a resource setting. Students attend the resource room for 47 minutes per period for each core academic area in which they are identified as learning disabled (LD). Students are mainstreamed into the regular classroom for all other academic areas. The least restrictive environment (LRE) requirement places the student in the resource room for needed academic intervention and with their peers for social exposure and social development.

Like many other school districts, the writer's setting requires teachers to wear many professional hats. The writer's current non-teaching responsibilities include: (a) co-chair for all junior high Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) meetings, (b) provide regular classroom observations, (c) administer yearly norm reference tests for special education referrals and End Of Year (EOY) reviews, (d) coordinate and develop Individualized Educational Programs (IEP), and (e) serve on the Teacher Assistant Team (TAT) that reviews all academic and behavioral problems for junior high students.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The academic and behavioral needs of junior high learning disabled students were not being met in the regular classroom during the transition process. In the writer's work setting, and for this practicum, transition students are described as (a) those students that are placed in special education within the category of students with "Specific Learning Disabilities" (SLD) as defined by P.L. 94-142; (b) those students that are placed in the special education resource room for their deficit areas and are mainstreamed out for regular classroom instruction for science, social studies, computer education, art, and physical education; and (c) those resource students that are placed in all regular education classes on a fulltime schedule and are monitored by the resource room teacher quarterly until they graduate from eighth grade.

Before the implementation of this practicum, students in transition developed poor work habits, displayed inappropriate behavior, developed poor social skills, did not complete homework assignments, and experienced low academic achievement. This problem was apparent when midterm failure notices were sent out and quarterly grades were issued. The majority of students in transition failed because their academic and behavioral needs were not being met in the regular classroom.

In the writer's work setting, transitioning was handled subjectively by the resource room teacher because the resource room teacher was the professional who worked the closest with the disabled students and was aware of their academic and behavioral strengths and weaknesses. Transitioning from a more restrictive environment to a least restrictive environment (regular classroom) was not unjustified. The problem was the way transitions were handled. Some of the past conflicts occurred due to the following reasons:

- Disabled students achieved academic success in the resource room but were unable to transfer it to the regular classroom.
- Disabled student's behavior conflicted with the regular classroom teacher's acceptable tolerance level.
- Regular classroom teachers were not involved in the decision-making process of the disabled student or the transition process back into the regular classroom.
- Disabled students were not able to handle the structure in the regular classroom.
- Disabled students could not keep up with the assigned classwork and homework.
- Regular classroom teachers expected the same academic and behavioral performance from the disabled student as they did from the nondisabled student.
- Regular classroom teachers lacked special education training.

- Disabled students were graded on the same criteria as nondisabled students.
- Open communication was lacking between the resource room teacher and the regular classroom teacher before, during, and after transition.
- There was little or no follow-up services and student evaluation after transition.
- Disabled students passed even though they received failing grades.
- Regular classroom teachers did not feel as though they had any input regarding disabled students and the transition process.

Problem Documentation

One of the most discussed issues during teacher meetings and in conversations between the writer (junior high resource room teacher) and regular classroom teachers dealt with the difficulty regular classroom teachers experienced with special education students that are transitioned into their classroom. Practically every day regular classroom teachers discussed the problem in passing on campus, between classes, on playground duty, and while leaving school. To identify the problem areas the writer developed and distributed a problem generation survey to each junior high teacher. This survey was used as "food for thought" and was followed-up by an interview with each junior high teacher. Results from interviewing each junior high teacher revealed several obstacles existed for students in transition. The majority of the

regular classroom teachers expressed the following four concerns: (1) why did failing students still receive passing grades, (2) the process of referring a student to special education was confusing, (3) confusion and lack of knowledge existed regarding learning disabled students, and (4) why did some students qualify for special education and other students who are failing did not.

To define clearly the actual obstacles that existed the writer developed a comprehensive Special Education Questionnaire (Appendix A). This questionnaire solicited information from each junior high teacher relating to: (1) their knowledge and understanding of special education, (2) their knowledge of disabled student's behavior, and (3) their knowledge of Federal special education legislation.

Results from the Special Education Questionnaire revealed several reasons why the academic and behavioral needs of junior high learning disabled (LD) students were not being met in the regular classroom during the transition process. All the junior high teachers surveyed had a low preference towards having learning disabled students in their classroom. A reason supporting this as a problem was noted when most of the junior high teachers stated that they did not understand the unique academic and social needs of the learning disabled student. As a result, they felt they were unable to meet the academic and behavioral needs of transitioned students through their current instructional methods. When the junior high teachers were questioned about their understanding of the failure syndrome (Harwell, 1989) the majority of the

teachers were unclear of its definition and how it can influence LD students' academics. Most of the junior high teachers revealed that they had little academic preparation to teach LD students and felt students in transition were just "taking up a desk" and "socializing with their neighbors." These teachers pointed out that the only time a transitioned student would do any work was during one-to-one contact with the classroom teacher. The same group of teachers also noted that they did not receive information about transitioned students' academic ability or classroom behavior. As a result, teachers were left wondering how to educate the learning disabled student in transition.

When junior high teachers were asked about their knowledge concerning the criteria used for special education placement most of them had a limited understanding. Failing LD students who were allowed to play sports was also a major concern. Many of the junior high teachers were unaware of the school district's "No Pass No Play" policy and how it affects academics and the LD student. All junior high teachers noted the need to know and understand what can be expected from transitioned students and were concerned as to why transitioned students were unable to follow regular classroom directions and routines. Junior high teachers also expressed the need for guidelines and follow-up contacts after transitioned students were placed in their room.

After the questionnaire was reviewed and analyzed, the writer observed three LD students in transition for one week covering nine forty-seven minute class periods. During the observation period it was found that all three students

failed to follow verbal direction 80% of the time. This was occurring because: (a) students were not paying attention, (b) students were being distracted by other students or things in the classroom, and (c) students were not able to fully understand what the teacher was trying to say. All three students were unsure of assignments 75% of the time. This was a result of: (a) students not listening when directions were given, (b) students arriving to class without paper and pencil for writing down assignments, (c) students being preoccupied with something else in the room, and (d) students not interested in getting the assignment. In addition all three students were without necessary classroom materials and books 90% of the time. Normally, students in the resource room are supplied with all the necessary books and materials. Seldom are they required to bring items with them or be responsible for taking materials out of the room and returning them. None of the three students copied board instructions into their assignment notebooks 80% of the time. Developing the skills and responsibility to copy important information off the chalkboard is a major obstacle for each transitioned student. Also, making sure they carry an assignment notebook for recording this information is another difficulty. Two students displayed inappropriate classroom behavior 90% of the time. The third student's behavior was inappropriate 30% of the time. The third student was more mature than the other two students thus accounting for better social behavior. The two less mature students seemed to get encouragement from the other students to act as class clowns or were enticed by others to display

inappropriate behavior. Most of the time the inappropriate behavior started between classes and continued into the next class. This behavior syndrome was consistent from class-to-class and teacher-to-teacher throughout the day. There was one exception to the inappropriate behavior; one teacher would not tolerate any inappropriate behavior. If transitioned students displayed inappropriate behavior they would be sent to the office immediately. As a result, the transitioned students were better behaved in this class but still were not up to the expected class norm.

Causative Analysis

Six obstacles were noted as causes for the academic and behavioral needs of the learning disabled resource students not being met in the regular classroom. The first cause was the lack of special education training for regular classroom teachers in the area of serving LD students. Most universities only require teachers to take an introductory course in special education for their education degrees. This lack of undergraduate special education training becomes apparent when regular classroom teachers have LD students transitioned into their classrooms. Teachers find themselves at a loss in meeting the unique academic and behavioral needs for LD students and this requires them to rely on outside resources.

The second obstacle interfering with successful transitioning of LD students

can be seen in junior high teachers' choice towards having transitioned students in their regular classroom. When teachers were asked about their preference for having transitioned students in their classroom they responded in the following manner: One out of eight junior high teachers preferred having learning disabled students in the regular classroom with their peers, two out of eight teachers preferred having all special education students in a self-contained special education classroom, four out of eight teachers preferred the resource room model the writer's school currently uses where students attend special education classes for deficit areas only and one of the eight junior high teachers preferred using an altogether alternative model. This alternative model would mean placing learning disabled students in a self-contained special education classroom for all their academics and having the resource room teacher follow all regular classroom lesson plans. For example, each learning disabled student would be doing exactly the same work as their peers with modification and adaptation to accommodate individual student learning styles by the resource room teacher. This alternative model is exactly opposite of special education's mainstreaming and least restrictive environment requirements.

The third obstacle that became evident during teacher interviews related to special education placement. Teachers felt that once students are placed in the resource room they should remain there. Regular classroom teachers find it difficult to adjust their teaching styles and curriculum to meet the academic needs of students who fall outside the normal curve of academic achievement.

Regular classroom teachers' inability to adjust their teaching styles and curriculum has a direct relationship to the success of transitioned students.

The fourth obstacle is that transitioned students lack the necessary responsibility to succeed in the regular classroom environment. Transitioned students who leave the resource room and reenter the regular classroom are accustomed to having no responsibility other than getting to class on time. They are used to a small class size, one-to-one or small group instruction, having all of their instructional information hand-delivered in a tailored fashion, immediate response on assignments, and a no-failure environment.

The fifth obstacle is that regular classroom teachers did not have quality follow-up from the resource teacher on their transitioned students. Teachers felt that once students are transitioned back into the regular classroom they are expected to take on all the responsibility without any assistance or guidance. George & Lewis (1991) pointed out in their article that little information exists for teachers when it comes to specific steps to follow when transitioning students into the regular classroom (p. 34).

The sixth obstacle involved regular classroom teachers who did not understand the role of the resource room teacher in the child's educational process. Half of the junior high teachers had little working knowledge of the school's special education program. Only half of the junior high teachers had a knowledgeable understanding of least restrictive environment (LRE) and how it applies to the LD student.

Each area taken individually was not enough to create a major obstacle on its own, but combined with all the other causes, they did present a significant hindrance for successful transitioning of learning disabled students from the resource room back into the regular classroom.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHCA) provides an extensive outline of requirements for placing a student into special education. This, combined with state and local school district requirements, ensures a tailored procedure for entry into special education by disabled students. However, little attention is being placed on exiting students out of direct special education services and transitioning them back into mainstream education (Grosenick, George and George,1988). The EHCA's regulations state that each public agency shall insure: (1) that to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not handicapped; and (2) that special classes, separate schooling or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily (34 C.F.R. § 300.550(b)). This legislation, and the mainstreaming component, is what every school district deals with each time they place a student in special

education. It is also the main focus behind this practicum. For the past nine years the writer has been teaching in the school setting where this practicum was implemented. During that time, mainstreaming of disabled students into regular classroom environments has been the number one problem within the special education program and what the regular classroom teacher fears most.

The force behind mainstreaming started with the passage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112). This particular law created individual sections relating to discrimination. Section 504 of P.L. 93-112 states that no individual, regardless of the severity of their disability, can be discriminated against. P.L. 93-112 was further strengthened by the passage of the Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (EHCA), (P.L. 94-142). This law explains the rights for all handicapped children and their education. P.L. 94-142 provides for:

> ...a free appropriate public education for all children with disabilities, ensures due process rights, mandates education in the least restrictive environment, and mandates Individualized Education Programs, among other things. It is the core of federal funding for special education (Horne, 1991, p. 12).

One of the main components of P.L. 94-142 is the least restrictive environment (LRE) requirement. The LRE states that each student will receive his or her education in an environment with the least restriction and the LRE needs to be stated in each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). So,

what does all this legislation mean? P.L. 94-142 plainly states:

> ...to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, [should be] educated with children who are not handicapped, and that separate schooling, or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment [should] occur only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily...(Rothstein, 1990, p. 109).

Salend (1990) points out some of the problems associated with mainstreaming. Salend says the regular classroom teacher is not trained to work with disabled students, instructing disabled students will take too much time away from nonhandicapped students, regular classroom teachers and nonhandicapped students have negative attitudes toward handicapped students, the regular classroom environment is not able to handle handicapped students, and research has not established that the regular classroom environment will produce positive academic gains or results. Salend also states that many professionals feel special education classes for handicapped students "will protect them from the harmful effects of repeated failures that they will experience in the regular education setting" (p. 18).

Many school districts, as is true in the writer's district, fail to change their educational environment and instructional methods when transitioning

students back into mainstream education. Stainback, Stainback, Courtnage, and Jaben (1985) revealed that because districts do not have established mainstreaming guidelines, program placement is the least expensive alternative rather than the least restrictive alternative. Salend, Brooks, and Salend (1987) surveyed several special education administrators and found that although they supported the philosophy of mainstreaming, few had established procedures to follow when mainstreaming students back into the regular classroom. As a result, most mainstreaming was handled on an informal basis between the regular classroom teacher and the special education teacher.

Teachers thoroughly understand that scheduling is a major problem when mainstreaming students back into the regular classroom. Wood (1989) surveyed regular classroom teachers and found they had difficulty with transition students because transition students: (1) have difficulty functioning in groups, (2) are excused for certain class projects and assignments, (3) follow a different standard for grading, (4) have trouble completing classroom assignments, (5) are not able to cope with the change when they enter the regular classroom, (6) are not able to take part in all regular classroom activities, and (7) forget to bring to bring the necessary classroom material with them to class.

Meier (1992) found that mainstreaming handicapped students into the regular classroom created problems because of the attitude regular classroom teachers had towards handicapped students combined with their lack of

appropriate training. Meier also found that regular classroom teachers had difficulty understanding their role and responsibilities in the mainstreaming process. Meier states that regular classroom teachers indicated in his research that "mainstreaming, exceptional needs students, and students with cultural differences were not applicable to their positions" (p. 338). Meier pointed out that regular classroom teachers felt they were members of a professional team and were not adequately prepared to meet the needs of special education students.

Johnson and Johnson (1980) identified four problems that can occur when acceptive and supportive relationships do not exist between handicapped students and the nonhandicapped students. First, students are not assigned to groups to maximize the heterogeneity of a group. This can be overcome if the regular classroom teacher plans the groups to consist of high, low, and average students. Also, a group ratio of three nonhandicapped and one handicapped is suggested. Second, classrooms are not arranged to meet the handicapped student's learning and behavioral needs. Johnson and Johnson suggest seating group members in a way that they all have eye-to-eye contact, equal distance between each other, a clear vision of the chalkboard or teaching aids, and adequate hearing distance. By following these suggested room arrangements most obstacles that may hinder learning and interactivity could be eliminated. The third problem deals with using inappropriate educational materials when teaching transitioned students. This can be detrimental for a transitioned student because handicapped students who are not familiar with materials may not feel confident enough to take an

active part in group discussions. Adjusting materials to provide the student with the needed information for discussion or correct responses will help build the student's confidence level. The final problem focuses on the special education teacher and regular classroom teacher not working together as a collaborative team. This is a major obstacle for a successful transition. There needs to be open communication between the regular classroom teacher and the resource room teacher. A working relationship can be established through team teaching, observing students as they work, and helping the regular classroom teacher to identify problems in cognitive processing and social functioning. The resource room teacher can also assist the regular classroom teacher with information and input on the regular class student body.

When handicapped students reenter the regular classroom teachers often find alternative grading creates additional recordkeeping and consumes planning time. In some cases this may be true, but if the handicapped students' grades are to be fair and accurate, grading procedures need to change and "grades must begin to provide more descriptive information by showing individual student's gains and identifying specific needs for improvement" (Vasa, 1981, p. 16). Grades for nonhandicapped students in the regular classroom are often determined on written work and written tests. Handicapped students will find this type of assessment devastating and overwhelming. Teachers can adjust their grading procedures to include the following student performance areas in their recordkeeping: (1) class interaction and discussion, (2) class projects and/or

activities, (3) verbal reports, (4) interviews with the student, (5) anecdotal records of student performance, and (6) a daily log of student activities.

Vasa states by implementing some of the above activities little modification will need to take place in the regular grading system. Adjusting the evaluation procedure takes the emphasis away from standards and shifts it to reporting what skills are mastered. However, if the regular classroom teacher has a preference and prefers alternative grading they can follow these four practices: (1) contracts, (2) pass/fail, (3) letter or numeral grade, and (4) checklist.

Other areas that are successful when using alternative grading procedures include: (1) verbal tests, (2) adjusting the length of tests, (3) adjusting the level of questions, (4) cutting down on the frequency of tests, (5) adjusting the time limits for each test, (6) adjusting the type of responses, and (7) using course projects. Vasa concludes by stressing teachers must be: (1) well organized, (2) goal orientated, (3) systematic, and (4) able to design appropriate ways of measuring student achievement.

Information from literature that the writer reviewed for this practicum shows close correlation between independent studies and research. Table 1 shows the correlation between the writer's research of past studies dealing with transitioning and/or mainstreaming (George and Lewis, 1991; Meier, 1992; Stainback et al. 1985; Ariel, 1992; Salend, 1990; and Wood, 1989). All authors support the areas this practicum focused on to improve the transition

process for learning disabled students reentering the regular classroom from the resource room.

Table 1

Transitioning Correlations From Past Studies

Procedures	Authors				
	George and Lewis (1991)	Meier (1992)	Stainback et al. (1985)	Salend (1990)	Wood (1989)
Outline Procedures	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Assessing Regular Classroom	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Change Resource Routines & Materials To Match Regular Class	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Change Attitude of Regular Class Teacher	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Change Attitude of Regular Class Students	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Assess Readiness of Disabled Student	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Ongoing Evaluation & Follow-up	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Inservice Training for Regular Class Teachers	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Peer-Tutor With Disabled Students	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The goal of this practicum was to meet the academic and behavioral needs of junior high learning disabled students while they are in transition. Transition applies to students that are placed in the special education resource room for their deficit areas and mainstreamed out for regular classroom instruction. Within the writer's school, students are generally mainstreamed for social studies, science, computer training, art, and physical education. Transition also applies to students who have been placed in all regular education classes full time and are monitored by the resource room each quarter until they graduate from eighth grade.

Expected Outcomes

There were five expected outcomes for the 15 students and 8 teachers involved in this practicum. The first outcome was that each junior high learning disabled student in transition would complete 90% of their regular classroom assignments. These included classroom assignments as well as homework assignments. The second outcome was that junior high learning disabled students in transition would earn at least a passing grade in each subject. The third outcome was that receiving teachers of transitioned students would be provided

information regarding the transitioned student's academic and behavioral characteristics. The fourth outcome was that receiving teachers of transitioned students would have information and knowledge of the criteria used for special education placement. The fifth, and final, outcome was that receiving teachers would be knowledgeable of the academic and behavioral needs for each student in transition.

Measurement of Outcomes

The resource room teacher consulted with the regular teachers every third week to determine if the transitioned/mainstreamed students were passing 90% of the time. The monitoring was accomplished by providing regular classroom teachers with a district sponsored feedback form. This evaluation form was given to each teacher who had learning disabled (LD) students in their class on a three-week rotation basis throughout the practicum study. The regular classroom teacher filled out the feedback form and returned it to the principal for informational purposes. The feedback form was returned to the building principal first because the principal takes a very proactive role in the education of LD students. The principal, in turn, returned the summary to the resource room teacher. Early in the practicum study several of the already mainstreamed students were receiving failing grades. As a result, the "Daily Evaluation Card" (Appendix K) and "Weekly Evaluation Card" (Appendix L) was designed and distributed accordingly to keep from waiting for the district's every third-week

feedback form to circulate. The second monitoring consisted of a scheduled monthly meeting between the regular classroom teacher and the resource room teacher. During this meeting each transitioned/mainstreamed student's academic achievement and behavior were reviewed and the necessary intervention was designed. As a result of these meetings the regular classroom teachers began expressing satisfaction with the new transition procedure and the improved student behavior and academic achievement.

Each receiving teacher of transitioned students was given information regarding the transitioned student's academic achievement and behavioral characteristics. This resulted in fewer referrals for disruptive behavior because the regular classroom teachers understood beforehand individual student behaviors and were prepared to provide immediate intervention. Each receiving teacher of transitioned students was provided the criteria used for special education placement and transitioning for each student one month before the transition. By providing the regular classroom teacher with this information before the student arrived, the regular classroom teacher had a clearer understanding of the student's deficits and had preestablished measures to meet the academic and behavioral needs of each student.

Receiving teachers filled out a Posttransition Questionnaire (Appendix B) after each new transitioned student reentered their regular classroom. The Posttransition Questionnaire assessed the regular classroom teacher's knowledge regarding whether the following four items had been provided for them: (1)

initial criteria and qualification data that placed the student in special education, (2) criteria used to place the student into transition, (3) knowledge of the student's special academic needs and requirements, and (4) knowledge of the student's unique behavioral characteristics. Also, receiving teachers filled out a Posttransition Questionnaire at the end of the grading period to assess whether they received the necessary support services as explained in the new transition procedure. Results from the surveys clearly demonstrated that each regular classroom teacher had received all the prescribed assistance as defined in the transition procedures.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

Junior high learning disabled students academic and behavioral needs were not being met as they transitioned out of the resource room and reentered the regular classroom environment. The academic and behavioral needs of students that were already placed in the mainstream for regular class science, social studies, computer education, art, and physical education were also not being met. As a result, students in transition or already in the mainstream were developing poor work habits, displaying inappropriate behavior, developing poor social skills, were not completing homework assignments, and were experiencing low academic achievement.

George & Lewis (1991) pointed out in their recent study that specific steps for implementing a smooth transition from special to regular education have been lacking in the literature. They described their four phase process that uses data-based decision-making about each student's readiness to reintegrate back into the mainstream. The four phases focus on the following areas: (1) the student's initial IEP meeting; (2) incorporating pre-exit activities into three steps that include assessing the least restrictive setting, emulating or approximating regular classroom routines in the special class setting, and assessing the student's readiness to transition; (3) the actual transition; and (4)

guidelines for follow-up and evaluation. Following George & Lewis' research the writer's first idea involved including an actual transition procedure in each special education student's individualized educational plan (IEP). By including a transition procedure in the student's IEP receiving teachers were assured that the student in transition had indeed met the necessary criteria needed to exit the resource room and reenter the regular classroom. Each student who became a candidate for transitioning had documented evidence indicating that they were ready to transition. A transition procedure addressed the primary concern George and Lewis (1991) expressed when they said few guidelines are available for teachers to follow when transitioning resource students out of the resource room and back into the regular classroom.

Hundert (1982) presented several areas that would provide support for transitioning handicapped students back into mainstream education. Hundert's areas consisted of: (1) selection of a candidate to transition, (2) evaluate the regular classroom environment to ensure the transition will result in the student's least restrictive environment, (3) prepare the receiving teacher, (4) establish a support service plan, and (5) develop an inservice training plan for teachers. Two common support services used during transition are teacher consulting and the resource room teacher going directly into the regular classroom and working with the student. Hundert states that if the latter support service is used it should be gradually withdrawn leaving the regular classroom teacher with the consultative model. Hundert's final consideration focuses on

developing a clear plan. This plan should include a description of the objectives for placing the student in the regular classroom, the actual mechanics of the transfer, all the programs and services that will be available to the teacher and the student, and a schedule for evaluating the student's progress. Hundert points out that once this plan is developed it needs to be reviewed by the student's multidisciplinary team. One suggestion offered was to place the student in the regular classroom for one period per day and once the student becomes comfortable with the environment the time can be lengthened. Hundert feels by first placing the student in the regular classroom for short periods it will enable the student to become acclimated to the new environment and thus ensure a successful transition. Hundert concluded his findings by stating the two most successful factors affecting whether a transition will be successful focuses on: (1) early involvement of the regular classroom teacher in the decision-making process and (2) prioritizing the needs of the handicapped student in the regular classroom environment.

Following Hundert's research the writer developed a competency-based assessment to evaluate whether a resource student was ready to transition out of the resource room and reenter the regular classroom. Also, by preparing the receiving teacher through inservice training before a transitioned student entered their classroom helped them overcome any uncertainties they had regarding a student's educational and behavioral needs. Tymitz-Wolf, (1982) stated that before transitioning can be successful, inservice training needs to be

held on a regular basis. Salend and Johns (1983) explained that inservice trainers should focus on skills development for regular classroom teachers thus enabling them to overcome or compensate for their feelings of inadequacy. The writer followed Salend and John's suggestion and prioritized inservice training around the areas listed on the Special Education Questionnaire (Appendix A). Inservice training for junior high teachers in the area of special education is now going to be a yearly event.

Past transitions left the regular classroom teacher without any type of support services once a transition was complete. Now a support plan for each teacher benefits the transition process through letting the regular classroom teacher know there is support when unexpected problems arise.

Students who are now being considered for transitioning and/or mainstreaming meet an established criterion. Salend (1984) proposes the following six factors to consider when transitioning/mainstreaming students back into the regular classroom: (1) develop criteria for mainstreaming, (2) prepare handicapped students, (3) prepare nonhandicapped students, (4) establish open communication among educators, (5) evaluate student progress, and (6) provide teacher inservice training. Salend & Lutz (1984) identified 15 social skill competencies needed by the student before successful mainstreaming can take place. They placed these competencies in the following three general categories: (1) interaction with peers, (2) following classroom rules, and (3) using appropriate classroom work habits. They said using a competency-based

approach to identifying critical regular classroom academics and behavioral skills will ensure successful mainstreaming.

The resource room teacher begins the follow-up process after the LD student's transition into the regular classroom. Salend (1984) suggests waiting several weeks to enable the transitioned student enough time to get used to the new environment. After reentry, Salend suggests collecting evaluation information and data from three sources: (1) regular classroom teacher, (2) student's parents, and (3) the student. He says the regular classroom teacher can provide academic data from criterion-referenced tests.

Since the writer's overall goal was to improve the transition process for junior high learning disabled students reentering the regular classroom from the resource room the writer considered research that improved the transition process. Each idea focused around two objectives. The first, to ease the burden regular classroom teachers felt when transitioned or mainstreamed students reentered their classroom and second, by shifting more responsibility and accountability to the learning disabled students for their education. Easing the burden regular classroom teachers felt when they had LD students placed in their class improved the educational effort they made towards educating each LD student while at the same time improving the overall academic environment. Also, having each LD student take more responsibility for their academics and behavior provided them with the skills needed for success in the regular classroom realm as well as in future endeavors.

Developing a written communication flowchart, (Appendix D) combined with definitions (Appendix E) explaining each step on the flowchart, cleared-up many misunderstandings when students were transitioned and/or mainstreamed back into the regular classroom. Before this practicum study the district was already using a feedback form for periodic assessment of transitioned and/or mainstreamed students. However, regular classroom teachers were still confused as to the overall process of the feedback form and the procedure necessary to make changes within a transitioned/mainstreamed student's least restrictive environment (LRE). The written communications flowchart combined with flowchart definitions provided each regular classroom teacher with a pictorial reference during needed interventions.

Designing a list of teacher responsibilities (Appendix F) cleared-up ongoing concerns for regular classroom teachers. Now, the resource room teacher and the regular classroom teacher are aware of each other's roles when students are transitioned/mainstreamed into the regular classroom. Schultz, Carpenter, and Turnbull (1991) state that the essence of mainstreaming is shared responsibility between all educators within each facility. Ariel (1992) also emphasizes shared responsibility by stating that the school administration along with all support personnel needs to take the team approach to mainstreaming to guarantee the best education program as possible for each student.

By combining the resource room curriculum and the targeted regular

classroom curriculum for 30 days before transitions took place integrated the transition candidate's academic strength with the regular classroom curriculum. Hundert (1982) supports the theory that students need to move slowly back into the regular classroom setting if transitioning/mainstreaming is to be successful. Using a 30-day exposure to the actual classroom setting prepared the transition candidate academically and behaviorally. Salend (1990) states, "Prior to being mainstreamed, the student should be exposed to the textbooks and instructional materials used in the regular classroom" (p. 87). This 30-day period also allowed enough time for the regular classroom teacher and the resource room teacher to communicate more openly, become familiar with each other's classroom and materials, and established a working relationship aimed at successful transitioning of the student.

To help clear up the regular classroom teacher's uncertainties about the resource student's academic and behavioral strengths and weaknesses a student profile was provided before the student entered their classroom. By making the regular classroom teacher aware of the unique qualities of the transition candidate the teacher was able to establish realistic expectations that ensured the transition student more opportunity for success in the regular classroom environment. Teachers also used the student profile when they felt new intervention strategies were needed within a student's program. The writer feels the more information a regular classroom teacher has about their transitioned/mainstreamed students the more they are able to provide positive

academic and behavioral intervention.

Before this practicum was implemented, regular classroom teachers had little help with transitioned/mainstreamed students in their classroom. Results obtained from the special education questionnaire (Appendix A) pointed out that regular classroom teachers had little training and/or experience in the area of special education. The regular classroom teacher received support and relief of frustration when provided with a list of possible classroom modifications (Appendix J). The list was only meant as "possible modifications" and regular classroom teachers were encouraged to use "what works best for them and their transition/mainstream students." The list of possible modifications helped the regular classroom teacher to adjust the classroom environment to provide each transitioned/mainstreamed student with an environment that was conducive to academic success.

The school's existing feedback form was currently circulated to regular classroom teachers on a three-week rotation and had been successful for: (1) helping the transitioned/mainstreamed student keep current with missing assignments, (2) providing behavioral intervention, and (3) assisting the regular classroom teacher with particular needs. However, when the writer implemented this practicum it became obvious that several mainstream students had immediate needs that could not be contingent on the three-week evaluation cycle. To address the transitioned/mainstreamed student's immediate needs the writer envisioned using a Daily Evaluation Card (Appendix K) and a "Weekly

Evaluation Card" (Appendix L). The daily and weekly evaluation card did not supplant the three-week rotation evaluation but only served to support the form. The new evaluation cards gave the regular classroom teachers a quick and easy mean for enacting immediate intervention for poor academic performance and disruptive behavior. Teachers also received immediate assistance with other problems when they made note of their need in the comment section on either card. These evaluation cards also gave each transitioned/mainstreamed student the opportunity to increase their personal responsibility. The transitioned and/or mainstreamed students were required to: (1) present the evaluation card to the teacher (daily or weekly), (2) collect the evaluation card at the end of the period, (3) return the evaluation card to the resource room teacher or the teacher's mailbox before leaving school.

Clearing up the confusion regular classroom teachers had concerning the difference between a teacher assistance team (TAT) meeting and a multidisciplinary conference (MDC) was another idea the writer felt was necessary to improve the regular classroom teacher's involvement in the IEP decision-making process. Before the practicum study, TAT notices were, and still are, used for both meetings. As a result, the writer realized teachers should receive some sort of notice or invitation alerting them that the upcoming meeting was a MDC and not a general TAT. To clarify the difference between the two meetings the writer developed and issued an "IEP" invitation (Appendix M) notifying the regular classroom teacher that the upcoming meeting will be

addressing the needs of a special education student. The invitation personalized the meeting process and recognized each teacher's professional expertise.

Because of the number of implemented changes associated with this practicum study the writer felt teachers would need an overall explanation for each new form and process (Appendix N). Regular classroom teachers were able to refer to this explanation for immediate answers when difficulties arose during the transition/mainstream process for each student. The writer also realized during implementation that closure needed to be developed for this practicum. As a result, the writer developed the posttransition questionnaire (Appendix B). The questionnaire addressed the areas the regular classroom teacher needed follow-up services with when transitioned/mainstreamed students reentered their classroom. The questionnaire also provided the writer with a means of evaluating transition procedure and its 12 components between the regular classroom teacher, the resource room teacher, and the transitioned and/or mainstreamed students.

Description of Selected Solution

The review of literature suggested that before a successful transition can be implemented guidelines need to be established supporting reentry into the regular classroom structure. The literature review emphasized this by stating that without an established procedure the special education student in transition is bound to fail. Also, procedures to support successful transitioning need to be

tailored to the individual school environment, regular classroom environment, regular classroom teacher, and the student reentering the mainstream of education. With this protocol in mind the writer selected the following solution to improve the transition process for learning disabled student's reentry into the regular classroom. The solution involved implementing a transition procedure (Appendix C) as part of the student's individualized education plan (IEP). This procedure outlined the exact steps students would follow once they became a candidate to transition back into the regular classroom. The primary solution for this practicum was the development of a transition procedure to be included in each student's IEP. This solution consisted of 12 other components that the writer developed and implemented. They are as follows:

1. A Written Communication Flowchart (Appendix D). The flowchart illustrated the procedures for written communication between the regular classroom teacher and the resource room teacher for transitioned/mainstreamed students. The flowchart also followed the district's special education feedback form.
2. Flowchart Definitions (Appendix E). The flowchart definitions were developed to explain the communication process for transitioned and/or mainstreamed students and to detail the exact function within each area of the flowchart for each junior high teacher.
3. Teacher Responsibilities (Appendix F). This component identified the responsibilities of the regular classroom teacher and the resource room

teacher regarding transitioned/mainstreamed students during the transition/mainstream process.

4. Competency-Based Assessment Checklist (Appendix G). The checklist identified the competencies that were necessary prerequisites for readiness, behavior, and academics for LD students' reentry into the regular classroom.
5. Modified Resource Room Schedule (Appendix H). Each candidate for transitioning followed a modified resource room schedule emulating the regular classroom's instructional and behavioral environment 30 days before reentering the regular classroom. This new resource room procedure exposed the transition candidates to the competencies and demands that will be required of him/her in the regular classroom.
6. Student Profile (Appendix I). Information for the regular classroom teacher concerning the student's academic and behavioral characteristics, mainstream schedule, date of reentry, resource assistance, and the criteria used in qualifying the student for transitioning.
7. Possible Regular Classroom Modifications (Appendix J). The list of possible modifications the teacher could use to adjust the regular classroom environment, adjust instructional material, adjust teacher management techniques, adjusting teaching techniques, and adjusting the student assignments.

8. Daily Evaluation Card (Appendix K) and Weekly Evaluation Card (Appendix L). The evaluation cards were used by the regular classroom teacher for a quick daily or weekly evaluation of the student's academics and behavior and to request immediate intervention from the resource room teacher. The transitioned/mainstreamed student was required to fill out the personal data on the card, submit the card to the regular classroom teacher, and collect and return the card to the resource room teacher which helped to develop personal responsibility skills for the student.
9. A Special IEP Invitation (Appendix N). This component established a clear difference, for regular classroom teachers, between a teacher assistant team (TAT) meeting that addresses the academic and/or behavior problems for all junior high students verses a multidisciplinary conference (MDC) that addresses the special education student's total needs.
10. Definitions for Components (Appendix N). These definitions were designed to provide the regular classroom teacher with a quick and continuous clarification of what was involved with the new transition procedure, forms, and processes.
11. Teacher Inservice Training. The inservice training focused on the new transition procedure, forms, and processes; the unique academic and behavioral needs of the learning disabled student; and Federal

legislation mandating special education within public schools. Individual discussion topics and presentations addressed all the items stated in the special education questionnaire.

12. A Posttransition Questionnaire (Appendix B). This component brought closure and clarification to the new transition procedure, its forms, and processes. It also provided the writer with response and ongoing evaluation from the regular classroom teachers as to whether or not the new procedure, forms, and processes were meeting the teacher's needs and the needs of the transitioned/mainstreamed students.

The new aforementioned transition procedure, its forms, and processes have been successfully implemented and were enclosed in a Transition Procedure Notebook and distribution to each junior high teacher throughout the implementation period. The regular classroom teachers were encouraged to use the notebook to keep and file all special education information they receive throughout each school year.

Report of Action Taken

During the first two weeks of this practicum the writer met with the school principal and junior high teacher to review the practicum, the expected benefits resulting from the practicum, and the timeline for each step during implementation. The end of week two coincided with midterm reporting period for the second quarter. The writer surveyed the special education students'

midterm failing notices (Table 3) to compare the number of failing notices for pre /postpracticum evaluation.

During the third week of implementation a transition procedure (Appendix C) was developed for inclusion in each student's individualized education plan (IEP). This procedure outlined the exact steps students followed once they became a candidate to transition back into the regular classroom. Developing a transition procedure and including it as part of each student's IEP was the primary focus for this practicum. By the end of the fourth week a flowchart for communication (Appendix D) and flowchart definitions (Appendix E) were distributed to each junior high teacher.

During the fifth week the Daily Evaluation Card (Appendix K) and the Weekly Evaluation Card (Appendix L) replaced the participant's unexpected events journal. The change in procedure was made to compensate for the district's currently used special education feedback form. Rationale for the change was based on the fact that many of the students already in the mainstream process had immediate needs that required a procedure for immediate intervention. Many teachers were also in need of a procedure that would provide them with immediate classroom intervention. By the end of the sixth week each junior high teacher had received a copy of teacher responsibilities (Appendix F) that were used during the transition or mainstream process.

The following week, week seven, the writer implemented a modified resource room procedure (Appendix H) that transitioned candidates followed for

30 days before reentry into the regular classroom. During week eight a student profile (Appendix I) was developed and distributed to each teacher receiving transitioned/mainstreamed students. During week nine a list of possible regular classroom modifications (Appendix J) was developed and distributed to each junior high teacher. The regular classroom teacher began using the modifications to improve the learning environment for transitioned and/or mainstreamed students.

During the following two weeks the writer provided inservice training for each junior high teacher. The inservice training was only required for junior high teachers but the writer issued an open invitation to all district teachers. The content of the inservice training focused around the survey questions in the special education questionnaire (Appendix A). For teachers who were unable to attend because of conflicting schedules the writer held individual inservice sessions at a more convenient time. All junior high teachers were inserviced either during the group inservice training program or on an individual basis within the tenth and eleventh week of the practicum.

During the twelfth and final week of implementation, the writer realized a procedure was needed to bring closure to the 12 components. A posttransition questionnaire (Appendix B) was developed and distributed to each junior high teacher enabling the writer to have a means of quarterly evaluation and ongoing comments from the regular classroom teachers. The posttransition questionnaire keeps the writer abreast of the effectiveness of the new transition procedure, its

forms, and processes. It also provides the writer with an ongoing quantifiable job performance evaluation regarding the goal of meeting the needs of the regular classroom teachers and the transitioned/mainstreamed students.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The academic and behavioral needs of the junior high learning disabled students (LD) were not being met when they transitioned out of the resource room and reentered the regular classroom. Resource students already placed in the mainstream for science, social studies, computer education, art, and physical education were experiencing academic failure and displaying inappropriate behaviors in these subject areas. The regular classroom teachers were frustrated because there were few support services from the resource room teacher and special education department. This problem was compounded by the fact that the majority of the junior high teachers had little special education coursework before graduating from college. Also, the district was not providing teachers with any inservice training in the area of special education. As a result, when students were either transitioned and/or mainstreamed into a regular classroom the regular classroom teacher felt stranded.

To eliminate the difficulties the regular classroom teachers were having and at the same time create an environment that would be academically and behaviorally rewarding to LD students in transition and/or already in the mainstream the writer developed and implemented a junior high transition procedure involving 12 components designed to improve the transition process

for LD students reentering the regular classroom from the resource room. The solution to the problem was the implementation of a transition procedure that was included in each LD student's IEP. The transition procedure included the following 12 supportive components: (1) a written communication flowchart, (2) a set of flowchart definitions explaining each step, (3) a list of responsibilities for the regular classroom teacher and the resource room teacher, (4) a competency-based assessment checklist, (5) a modified resource room schedule, (6) a LD student profile, (7) a list of regular classroom modifications, (8) a daily evaluation card, (9) a weekly evaluation card, (10) a teacher inservice program, (11) a posttransition questionnaire, and (12) a list of definitions for each of the 12 components.

The new transition procedure and the 12 related components were implemented over a period of 12 weeks. During that time the writer was able to identify improvements in the following areas: (a) the completion of in-class assignments by LD students, (b) the transitioned/mainstreamed student's overall achievement and output increased, (c) the regular classroom teacher's feeling of abandonment was removed and replaced with compensation, and (d) the regular classroom teacher is now less reluctant to receive a transitioned/mainstreamed student.

Prior to the implementation of this practicum each junior high teacher filled out a special education questionnaire (Appendix A) that had been developed by the writer. The results from this questionnaire served as the baseline for the

practicum and inservice training. After analyzing the results from the special education questionnaire, the writer established five outcomes for the practicum. The first outcome focused on having each transitioned/mainstreamed student complete 90% of their in-class assignments. The evaluation of this outcome resulted in having each junior high teacher review their gradebook for the number of completed in-class and homework assignment during the first-quarter grading period of the 1993-1994 school year. Their results are listed on Table 2 in the "A" column. Following the third-quarter grading period and after the implementation of this practicum the same teachers again reviewed their gradebook for the number of in-class and homework assignments that were completed. These results are reported on Table 2 in the "B" column. It should be pointed out that the increase in the number of assignments for science, social studies, computer education, art, and physical education, was a result of all junior high resource students being mainstreamed for those academic areas.

The data listed in Table 2 shows that before this practicum the students in math completed 28% of the required in-class assignments and 16% of the homework assignments. No results are listed for the third-quarter because the students reentered the resource room for math. In reading, before implementation, 22% of the in-class assignments were completed and 10% of the homework assignments. Following implementation, 88% of the in-class assignments were completed and 80% of the homework assignments. In language,

Table 2

Comparison of junior high transitioned/mainstreamed students completing/not completing in-class and homework assignments for the first nine-week grading period of the 1993-1994 school year.

Subject Areas Responding = 8

Subject Area	#of Student Records		In-Class Assignments/Homework Assignments							
			Yes		No		Yes		No	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Math	1	0	10	--	25	--	4	--	21	--
Reading	1	1	5	21	18	3	2	16	18	4
Language	1	1	3	19	20	2	2	15	18	1
Science	10	10	42	150	120	9	54	120	134	2
Social Studies	10	10	50	170	198	7	49	160	112	13
Computer Education	10	10	140	150	100	12	--	--	--	--
Art	10	10	35	62	50	7	--	--	--	--
Physical Education	10	10	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

before implementation, 13% of the in-class assignments were completed and 10% of the homework assignments. Following implementation, 90% of the in-class assignments were completed and 94% of the homework assignments. In science, before implementation, 26% of the in-class assignments were completed and 29% of the homework assignments. Following implementation 94% of the in-class assignments were completed and 98% of the homework assignments. In social studies, before implementation, 34% of the in-class assignments were completed and 30% of the homework assignments. Following

implementation, 96% of the in-class were completed and 92% of the homework assignments. In computer education, before implementation, 58% of the in-class assignments were completed. Following implementation 92% of the in-class assignments were completed. In art, before implementation, 41% of the in-class assignments were completed. Following implementation 92% of the in-class assignments were completed. This data clearly demonstrated the transitioned/mainstreamed students met the 90% completion goal in all areas except reading. In reading only one student was mainstreamed and that student completed 21 of the required 24 in-class assignments resulting in a 88% completion rate.

The second outcome for this practicum was to have each transitioned and/or mainstreamed student earn a passing grade in each subject. Table 3 shows a comparison of the number of midterm failing notices for all the transitioned/mainstreamed students that regular classroom teachers filed for the first, second, and third quarters of the 1993-1994 school year. Results listed in the third-quarter column followed the practicum study.

The third outcome focused on improving the regular classroom teacher's understanding of each transitioned/mainstreamed student's academic and behavioral characteristics, the fourth outcome focused on informing each receiving teacher of the academic and behavioral needs of the transitioned and/or mainstreamed student, and the fifth outcome focused on informing the receiving teacher of the criteria used for special education placement of each transitioned

Table 3

Comparison of total number of midterm failing notices submitted for high junior transitioned/mainstreamed students the first, second, and third quarter of the 1993-1994 school year.

Total Number of Transitioned/Mainstreamed Students = 11			
Grade level	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter
Seventh Grade Students	20	18	0
Eighth Grade Students	11	12	0

and/or mainstreamed student before they reentered their classroom. Following the third-quarter grading period and near the end of the practicum implementation period the writer surveyed each junior high teacher using the posttransition questionnaire (Appendix B) to establish whether the third, fourth, and fifth outcome had been met. The results listed in Table 4 clearly demonstrate that the third, fourth, and fifth outcomes were accomplished.

A special education questionnaire was administered to establish a baseline for teacher knowledge. The prequestionnaire had four objectives for the regular classroom teachers and served as the baseline for: (1) teacher knowledge and understanding of learning disabled students, (2) teacher knowledge and understanding of the district's special education program, (3) teacher knowledge and understanding of a learning disabled student's learning deficits, and (4) teacher knowledge and understanding of Federal legislation for special education.

Table 4

Results from the posttransition questionnaire for regular classroom teachers.

Total Number of Teachers = 8	Teacher Response	
Survey Question	Yes	No
1. Are you part of the multidisciplinary team and the decision-making process that developed the least restrictive environment for the transition student?	8	0
2. Were you informed of the initial criteria and qualification data that placed the transitioned students in special education?	8	0
3. Were you informed of the criteria used that qualified the student for transition?	8	0
4. Were you made aware of the transition student's special academic requirements before having the student placed in your classroom?	8	0
5. Were you made aware of the transition student's special behavior requirements before having the student placed in your classroom?	8	0
6. Do you have a complete copy of the transition procedures for improving the transition process for learning disabled students reentering the regular classroom?	8	0
7. Have you received necessary follow-up with your transitioned student/s and/or mainstream student/s in you classroom?	8	0
8. Are the transitioned/mainstreamed students in your Classroom bringing their "Daily" or "Weekly" evaluation as outlined in the transition procedures?	8	0
9. Are you receiving "A Special 'IEP' Invitation" when resource students are scheduled for a multidisciplinary conference?	8	0
10. Do you receive follow-up contact from the feedback form within the stated in the transition procedures?	8	0
11. Do you need additional support services regarding the resource students in your classroom?	2	5

The first question on the questionnaire asked the regular classroom teachers where they felt most special education students were best served. The options teachers had to choose from included: (a) regular classroom with their peers,

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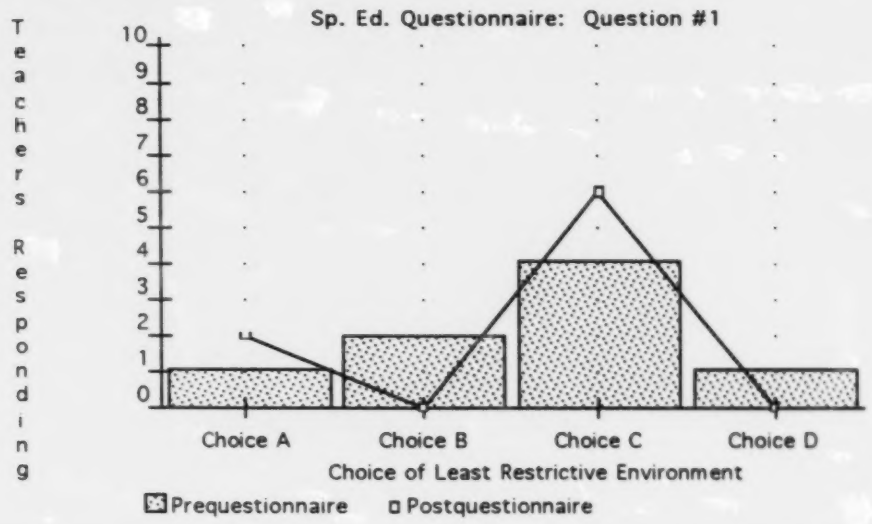
(b) self-contained special education classroom (all academic classes held in the same room), (c) resource room model (students attending special education classes for deficit areas only), and (d) other. Results from the pre / postquestionnaire for question one can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Results of Respondent's Choices on Question Number One.

Question #1: In you opinion, where do you feel most special education students are best served?

Number of Teachers Responding = 8



Prequestionnaire responses were mixed among the four choices with half of teachers selecting the district's currently used resource room model. Postquestionnaire results following the practicum and teacher inservice training

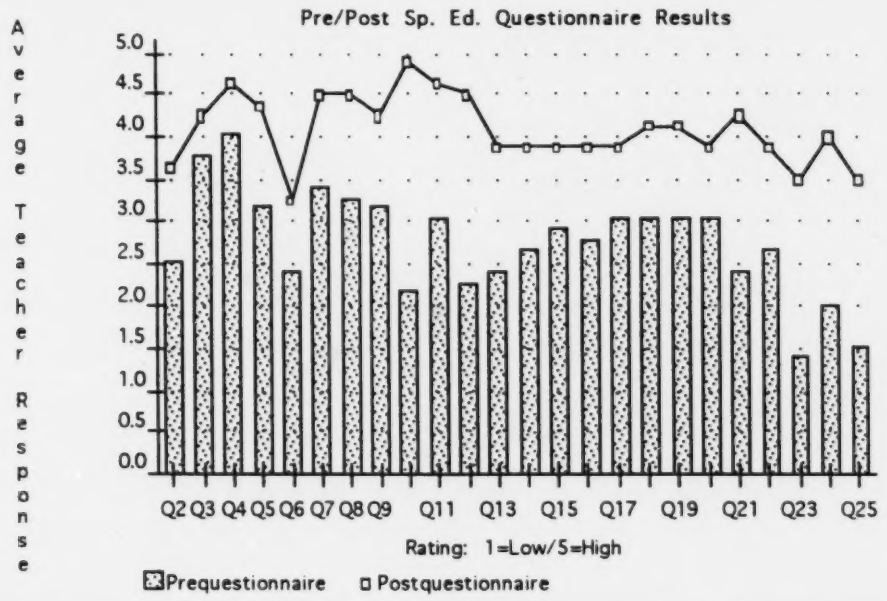
showed two out of eight teachers favor the self-contained classroom (Choice A) and the other six teachers favor the resource room model (Choice C) the district is currently using. The change in results reflects a positive change in teacher attitudes towards LD student and supports the least restrictive environment concept.

For questions 2 through 25 teachers were asked to rate themselves on a scale of one-to-five. A one response represents a "Low" rating and a five response represents a "High" rating. The average pre /postquestionnaire responses for questions 2 through 25 are listed in Figure 2 . One of the most important outcome from this practicum study can be seen in Figure 2, question number two, where junior high teachers were asked about their preference towards having learning disabled students in their classroom. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.1 points. This increase indicated that seven out of eight teachers rated themselves at the midpoint range or above as preference for having learning disabled students in their regular classroom. Improving the regular classroom teacher's overall understanding of the district's special education program was another important ingredient for this practicum study. In Figure 2, question number three, teachers were asked about their overall understanding of the district's special education program. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 0.5 which indicated that three out of eight teachers felt they had a "High" understanding of the special education program, four teachers above-average and one teacher selected the midpoint

Figure 2

Results of the Pre and Postspecial Education Questionnaire for Questions 2 through 25.

Number of Teachers Responding = 8



range. This question's results did not change dramatically but it is an indicator that the school district is headed in the right direction.

An issue receiving much attention today in the educational planning process as well as in litigation decisions deals with the "least restrictive environment." In Figure 2, question number four, teachers were ask about their understanding of the term Least Restrictive Environment. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 0.6. This increase indicated that all eight teachers reported an above-average understanding of least restrictive environment.

Within the writer's school setting a major misunderstanding focused around the school district's "No Pass No Play" policy. In Figure 2, question number five, teacher's were asked about their understanding of the "No Pass No Play" policy and how it relates to the special education student. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 2.1 points. This increase indicated that six teachers were reported a high understanding of the "No Pass No Play" policy and two teachers had an above average understanding.

As discussed in Chapter IV, there is a need for additional undergraduate training for regular classroom teachers in the area of special education. For teachers already in the teaching field there is a need for continuous inservice training. In Figure 2, question number six, teachers were asked about their special education training, experience, or education. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 0.9. This increase indicated that six out of eight teachers felt comfortable responding at the midpoint range or higher as to the amount of special education training they had. This increase in understanding special education by the regular classroom teacher has had a significant affect on the transitioned/mainstreamed students through improved instruction, classroom modifications, and using adjusted grading techniques.

In Figure 2, question number seven, junior high teachers were asked about their understanding of the unique academic and social needs of the learning disabled students. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.7 points. This increase indicated that all eight junior high teachers responded at

the midpoint range or higher. This increase in understanding is attributed to teacher inservice training and increased communication between the regular classroom teacher and resource room teacher.

Improving the regular classroom teacher's understanding of the referral process for special education was another important area addressed in this practicum. In Figure 2, question number eight, teachers were asked about their understanding of the procedures involved in referring a student for special education evaluation. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.2 points. This increase indicated that all eight junior high teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. This increase in understanding in the referral process is important because regular classroom teachers are now more likely to exhaust regular classroom alternatives before referring a low functioning student to the lengthy process of special evaluation referral.

A highly discussed and confusing concept among junior high teachers is the way some low functioning students qualify for special education and others do not. In Figure 2, question number nine, teachers were asked about their understanding of the criteria for placing learning disabled students in special education. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.2 points. This increase indicated that all eight junior high teacher responded at the midpoint range or higher when asked about their understanding of the criteria used for placing learning disabled students in special education.

Increasing the regular classroom teacher's understanding of the

psychoeducational evaluation process for special education eligibility and placement was another concern. In Figure 2, question number 10, teachers were asked about their understanding of the psychoeducational evaluation process for special education eligibility and placement. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 2.7 points which indicated that all eight junior high teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. This increase in understanding can be attributed to teacher inservice training and greater involvement by the regular classroom in the special education process.

Another important item that needed addressing dealt with improving the junior high teacher's understanding of the definition for learning disabilities. Figure 2, question number 11, teachers were asked about their understanding of the definition for learning disabilities. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.6 points. This increase indicated that three teachers had an above average understanding and the remaining five teachers had a "High" understanding of the definition of learning disabilities.

All junior high teachers are requested to serve on the Teacher Assistant Team (TAT) and the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT). However, before this practicum study most of the junior high teachers were unsure of the TAT's role concerning the special education student. In Figure 2, question number 12, teachers were asked about their understanding of the district's Teacher Assistant Team and its objectives. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 2.0 points. This increase indicated that all eight junior high teachers responded

at the midpoint range or higher. This increase shows that junior high teachers had a greater understanding of the TAT and its goals and objectives. In Figure 2, question number 12, teachers were asked about their understanding of the MDT. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.5 points. This increase indicated that seven out of eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. This increase in understanding for the TAT and the MDT was attributed, in part, to better communication and having the regular classroom teacher take a more active role in the decision-making process for LD students.

Increasing teacher awareness of the different types of learning disability was a primary emphasis for the teacher inservice training. During teacher inservice training each teacher was presented information in the areas of visual perceptual/visual motor deficits, auditory perceptual deficits, spatial relationships and body awareness deficits, motor output deficits, attention deficits disorder, failure syndrome, and serious emotional disability. In Figure 2, questions 14 through 22, represents the average teacher response to each question. Question 14 asked teachers about their understanding of visual perceptual and visual motor deficits. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.3 points. This increase indicated that seven out of eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. Question 15 asked teachers about their understanding of auditory perceptual deficits. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.0. This increase indicated that seven out of eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. Question 16

asked teachers about their understanding of spatial relationships and body awareness deficits. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.1 points. This increase indicated that seven out of eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. Question 17 asked teachers about their understanding of conceptual deficits. The average postquestionnaire response increased 0.9. This increase indicated that all eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. Question 18 asked teachers about their understanding of memory deficits. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.1 points. This increase indicated that all eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. Question 19 asked teachers about their understanding of motor output deficits. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.1 points. This increase indicated that all eight teachers responded to the midpoint range or higher. Question 20 asked teachers about their understanding of attention deficit disorder. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 0.9. This increase indicated that all eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. Question 21 asked teachers about their understanding of the failure syndrome. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 1.9 points. This increase indicated that seven out of eight teachers responded to the midpoint range or higher. Question 22 asked teachers about their understanding of serious emotional disability. The average postquestionnaire response was 1.3 points. This increase indicated that seven out of eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher.

Postquestionnaire results for questions 14 through 22 show a significant increase in teacher awareness of the different types of learning disability and improved knowledge of a learning disabled student's deficits. Teachers are now able to apply their new knowledge towards special programming, materials, instructional modifications, and the actual difficulties and/or struggles LD students go through when confronted with ways to learn new concepts.

Questions 23 through 25 surveyed teachers as to their knowledge of Federal legislation in special education. In Figure 2, question number 23, teachers were asked about their understanding of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, PL 94-142, Section 504. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 2.2 points. This increase indicated that seven out of eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. In Figure 2, question number 24, teachers were asked about their understanding of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, PL. 94-142. The average postquestionnaire response increased by 2.1 points. This increase indicated that all eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. In Figure 2, question number 25, teachers were asked about their understanding of the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendment of 1990 (IDEA). The average postquestionnaire response increased by 2.0 points. This increase indicated that seven out of eight teachers responded at the midpoint range or higher. There is significant improvement in how teachers rated themselves between the pre /postquestionnaire on all survey questions. This is a positive outcome from the practicum experience and an indicator that it was a

success. The writer plans to keep working cooperatively with the administration to increase better communication and provide inservice training for the district's regular classroom teachers.

Discussion

The process of developing transition procedures, providing inservice training for teachers, and holding transition students more accountable for their academics and behavior has had three significant results on the junior high special education program. The first result was the increased in communication between the regular classroom teacher and the resource room teacher. Regular classroom teachers now feel they have a definitive procedure to follow, established guidelines for support services, and ongoing student evaluation when students are transitioned into their classroom. The teacher's communication flowchart (Appendix D) and definition (Appendix E) explained each step and cleared up the otherwise wait-to-see method of evaluation and communication that was used before the practicum. Regular classroom teachers now take the every third week written communication procedures more seriously and go out of their way to document each student's current achievement, behavioral performance, and new teacher needs and/or intervention. The immediate follow-up on requests for needed intervention also proved successful. Immediate intervention resulted in fewer failing notices, fewer incomplete assignments, and fewer review of placement. The transitioned/mainstreamed students have

started showing more accountability for their education and behavior with the use of the "Daily Evaluation Card" (Appendix K) and the "Weekly Evaluation Card"(Appendix L).

The second positive result was the increase in regular classroom teachers' understanding of the district's special education program, learning disabilities, and Federal legislation supporting special education. The regular classroom teachers are now demonstrating that they understand the district's special education program in greater detail. The increased knowledge and understanding were apparent when the regular classroom teachers communicated with the writer during student staffings and at the teachers' monthly faculty meeting. Regular classroom teachers have begun communicating more openly about learning disabilities. The regular classroom teachers have started using available resources from the resource room before they automatically fill out a TAT request or request from the special education department that a student's least restrictive environment needs to be reviewed.

The regular classroom teachers now have a better understanding of the definition for learning disabilities and recognize that slow learners are not necessarily learning disabled. Teachers are demonstrating they have increased knowledge regarding the disabled student by applying additional resources, adapting the student's learning environment, adjusting teaching style, and adapting regular classroom materials to fit the student's academic needs. Using alternative approaches for student failure has replaced immediate student

referral. This change in philosophy has strengthened the overall special education program and improved the LD students' achievement.

Improved student accountability is the third positive result from this practicum study. Improved student accountability is evident by fewer students having to use the "Daily Evaluation Card," fewer incomplete regular assignments, fewer failing notices, and fewer complaints from regular classroom teachers regarding the transitioned/mainstreamed student's classroom performance. The resource room teacher has noticed an increase in regular classroom teacher's requests for assistance in the regular classroom, suggestions for adapting materials, suggestions for using adjusted grading, and support with transitioned/mainstreamed students taking exams under the supervision of the resource room teacher.

Individually, the transition procedures, teacher inservice training, and holding the transition student more accountable for their academics and behavior would not have much of an affect towards improving the transition process for learning disabled students reentering the regular classroom. However, by combining all of these solutions into a synchronized transition procedure they have had a dramatic and positive affect on the district's junior high special education program.

Recommendations

The writer has five recommendations that would support and strengthen the

results outlined in this study:

1. Teacher inservice training for special education should be broadened to include all district teachers and be held at least once a year.
2. The school district should consider adapting and/or implementing similar transition procedures for all grade levels along with placing more emphasis on the district's special education program, processes, and formal procedures.
3. The school district should encourage and/or put into district policy that regular classroom teachers be required to have a minimum of six postgraduate hours in special education.
4. The school district should encourage regular classroom teachers to attend local and state workshops in the area of special education.
5. The school district should sponsor inservice training for teachers by bringing in outside professionals in the field of special education and/or related services.

Dissemination

The results of this practicum study will be disseminated locally to the district superintendent and the governing school board, to the school administration and special education department, and to the faculty at a regular monthly meeting. On the county level, the writer will forward a copy of the practicum results to the county superintendent's office where they can be

distributed county-wide to interested school districts. On the state level the writer will use the practicum results when applying to call-for-papers for statewide organizations that sponsor workshops and conventions on special education. On the national level, the writer plans to contact the special education department at the writer's alma mater and offer to be a guest lecturer during a summer school session. Finally, the writer plans to submit a summary of this practicum study to academic journals in the field of elementary education, learning disabilities, and special education.

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APPENDIX A

SPECIAL EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Special Education Questionnaire

I. General Information

1) In your opinion, where do you feel most special education students are best served: (Circle A, B, C. or D)

A = Regular classroom with their peers

B = Self-contained special education classroom (all academic classes held in the same room).

C = Resource room model (students attending special education classes for deficit areas only).

D = Other (explain) _____

_____

_____

Low/High
1 5
Circle One

2) 1 2 3 4 5 Your preference towards having learning disabled students in your classroom.

3) 1 2 3 4 5 Your overall understanding of the districts special education program.

4) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of Least Restrictive Environment.

5) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of the "No Pass No Play" policy and the special education student.

6) 1 2 3 4 5 The amount of special education training, experience or education you presently have.

7) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of the unique academic and social needs of the learning disabled students.

8) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of the procedures involved in referring a student for special education evaluation.

9) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of the criteria for placing learning disabled students into special education.

10) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of the psychoeducational evaluation process for a special education eligibility and placement.

11) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of the definition for learning disabilities.

Special Education Questionnaire continued

Low/High
1 5
Circle one

12) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of the district's Teacher Assistant Team (TAT) and its objective/s.

13) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of a learning disabled student's multidisciplinary team.

14) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of visual perceptual or visual motor deficits.

15) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of auditory perceptual deficits.

16) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of spatial relationships and body awareness deficits.

17) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of conceptual deficits.

18) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of memory deficits.

19) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of motor output deficits

II. Behavioral Components

20) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of attention deficit disorder.

21) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of failure syndrome.

22) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of serious emotional disability.

III. Federal Legislation

23) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, PL. 93-112, Section 504.

24) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) of 1975, PL. 94-142.

25) 1 2 3 4 5 Your understanding of the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendment of 1990 (IDEA), PL. 101-476.

APPENDIX B

POSTTRANSITION QUESTIONNAIRE

POSTTRANSITION AND SUPPORT SERVICES QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR
REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Check One Yes	No	
☐	☐	Are you part of the multidisciplinary team and the decision-making process that developed the least restrictive environment for the transition student?
☐	☐	Were you informed of the initial criteria and qualification data that placed the transitioned students in special education?
☐	☐	Were you informed of the criteria used that qualified the student for transition?
☐	☐	Were you made aware of the transition student's special academic requirements before having the student placed in your classroom?
☐	☐	Were you made aware of the transition student's special behavior requirements before having the student placed in your classroom?
☐	☐	Do you have a complete copy of the transition procedures for improving the transition process for learning disabled students ring the regular classroom?
☐	☐	Have you received necessary follow-up with your transitioned student/s and/or mainstream student/s in you classroom?
☐	☐	Are the transitioned/mainstreamed students in your classroom bringing their "Daily" or "Weekly" evaluation as outlined in the transition procedures?
☐	☐	Are you receiving "A Special 'IEP' Invitation" when resource students are scheduled for a multidisciplinary conference?
☐	☐	Do you receive follow-up contact from the feedback form within the time stated in the transition procedures?
☐	☐	Do you need additional support services regarding the resource students in your classroom? If yes, describe what you need below.

Comments:

_____

_____

APPENDIX C

TRANSITION PROCEDURE

TRANSITION PROCEDURES FOR JUNIOR HIGH LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS REENTERING THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

The following procedures will be part of each learning disabled (LD) student's individualized educational program (IEP) at the junior high school level. These procedures will assist in providing the student's multidisciplinary team with an appropriate criterion for determining the student's least restrictive environment (LRE). The competency-based assessment, one part of these procedures, can also be used at the annual IEP review to serve as the standard for validating the student's progress and a reminder of the competencies needed to transition out of the special education program.

1. The student's readiness will be assessed using a competency-based assessment.

2. The student will follow a modified resource room schedule the four weeks before transitioning.

3. The regular classroom teacher will receive a Student Profile regarding the academic and behavioral characteristics for each student in transition.

4. Each regular classroom teacher receiving a student through the transition process will be provided the following items:

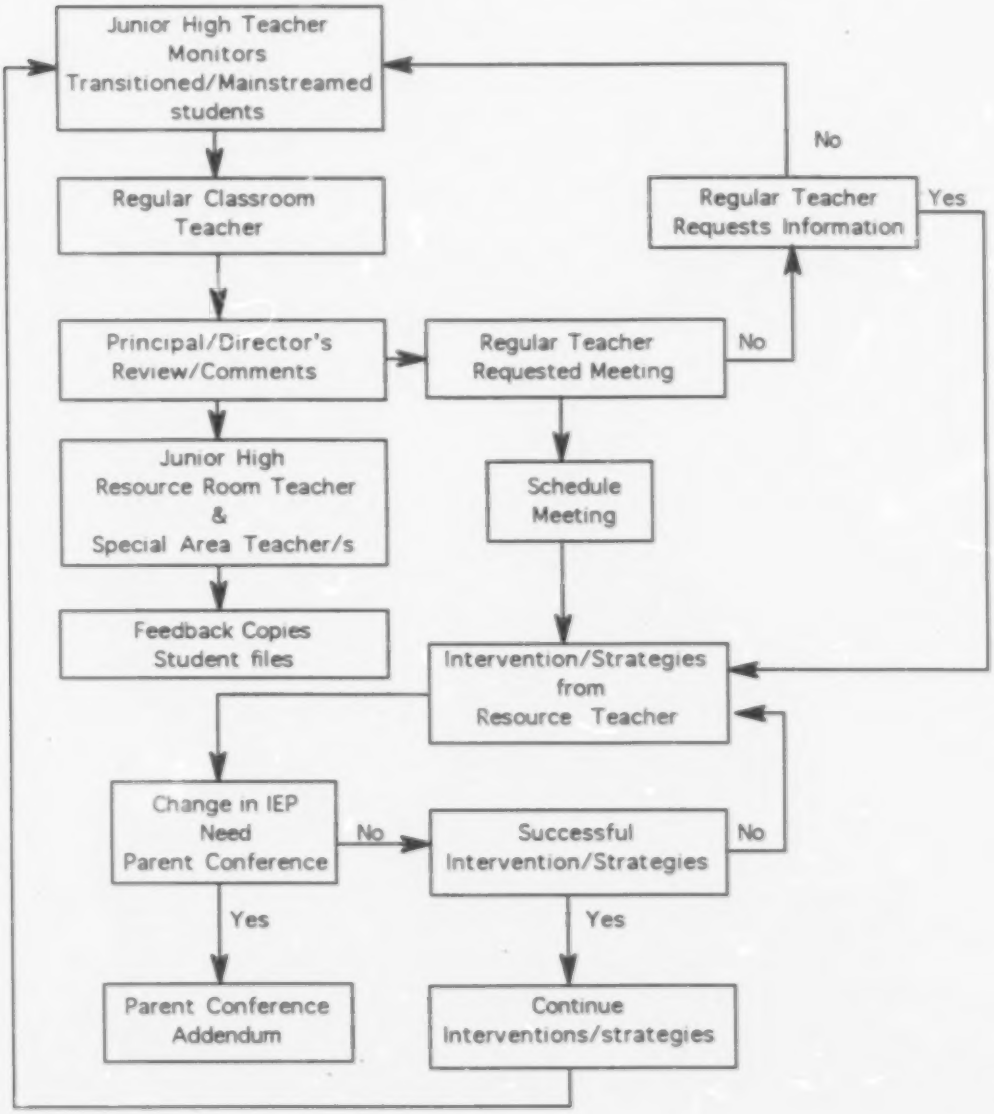
    - The student's competency-based assessment.
    - The student's academic and behavioral characteristics.
    - Strategies for possible academic and environment modifications to the regular classroom.
    - Scheduled communication procedures.
    - A communication flowchart.
    - Additional support services as required by the student/teacher. Additional support services will be assessed on individual transitioning/mainstreaming placement.

APPENDIX D

FLOWCHART

FLOWCHART

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS FOR TRANSITIONED/MAINSTREAMED STUDENTS



APPENDIX E

FLOWCHART DEFINITIONS

FLOWCHART DEFINITIONS

JUNIOR HIGH RESOURCE TEACHER: The resource teacher starts the written communication cycle every third Thursday by placing a feedback form/s in the regular classroom teacher's mailbox.

REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHER: The regular classroom teacher fills out the feedback form with information pertaining to the student's academic performance, behavioral performance, current grade, and whether the grade has been adjusted or not. **Regular classroom teachers are to returned the completed feedback forms to the principal by 8:00 a.m. the following Tuesday after receiving them.**

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/COMMENTS: The administrative personnel reviews all feedback forms and makes comments related to possible intervention strategies for the resource teacher to pursue.

JUNIOR HIGH RESOURCE TEACHER & SPECIAL AREA TEACHER/S: After the resource room teacher receives the feedback forms from the principal they are reviewed for needed intervention. If all academic and behavioral information is positive and the "NO" is circled regarding" no need for a meeting" the three week cycle repeats. However, if a regular classroom teacher has made note of the need for intervention/assistance the resource room teacher responds within two school days.

Also, if any students are receiving support services from other school/district personnel a copy of the feedback form is forwarded to them for review and recordkeeping. After support personnel review the feedback form they may also request intervention/assistance from the resource room teacher.

FEEDBACK COPIES: Following administrative review of the feedback forms two copies are made for distribution. One copy is sent to the Director of Special Education and the other copy is sent to the special education office for placement in each student's special education file. At this step, the Special Education Director and/or school psychologist may also request additional information or data from the resource room teacher regarding a student's problem area/s.

REGULAR TEACHER REQUESTED INFORMATION: The resource teacher will answer and/or provide information within two days following a request.

REGULAR TEACHER REQUESTS A MEETING: The regular classroom teacher can request a meeting with the resource teacher by circling the "YES" on the feedback form and stating the best time to meet.

SCHEDULE MEETING: The resource teacher will schedule a meeting within two school days.

INTERVENTION/STRATEGIES FROM RESOURCE TEACHER: The resource teacher will provide intervention/assistance within two school days following a request.

CHANGE IN IEP - NEED PARENT CONFERENCE: The multidisciplinary team decides whether or not the resource teacher's proposed intervention strategy constitutes a major change in the student's current IEP. If yes, the parents need to be involved.

SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION/STRATEGIES: If the information, material, and/or intervention strategies provided by the resource room teacher are successful the three week written communication cycle repeats. If intervention/strategies are not successful the resource teacher provides additional intervention/strategies within two school days.

PARENT CONFERENCE - ADDENDUM: A meeting involving the student's multidisciplinary team, parents/guardian, and special area/s teacher is scheduled to add an addendum to the student's current IEP. The addendum list all new, agreed upon, modifications to the student's current IEP.

CONTINUE INTERVENTION/STRATEGIES: Suggested intervention/strategies are initiated and the three week written communication cycle repeats.

APPENDIX F

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES DURING THE TRANSITION/MAINSTREAM PROCESS

RESOURCE ROOM TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- The resource room teacher shall be available to regular classroom teachers for assistance with special education students.
- The resource room teacher can assist regular classroom teachers in developing appropriate classroom work for transition students.
- The resource room teacher can assist regular classroom teachers in developing appropriate grading criteria for transition students.
- The resource room teacher will receive feedback from the regular classroom teacher on each transition student on a three week rotation schedule.
- The resource room teacher will respond to any academic/behavioral request (either as a result of the Feedback Form) or as a result of needed intervention within a period of two school days.
- The resource room teacher shall be available to assist regular classroom teachers in determining transitioned student's mid-term, quarterly, semester, and final grades.
- The resource room teacher will be an active participant at all Teacher Assistant Team (TAT) meetings.
- The resource room teacher shall be available to provide inservice training for regular classroom teachers and regular classroom students.
- The resource room teacher shall be available to assist regular classroom teachers during test taking for transition students (e.g., in the regular classroom or in the resource room).
- The resource room teacher shall be available to assist regular classroom teachers during parent teacher conferences (if requested).

REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- The regular classroom teacher will be an active member of the Teacher Assistant Team (TAT).
- The regular classroom teacher should provide each learning disabled (LD) student with an academic environment commensurate with their ability.
- The regular classroom teacher should provide each LD student with a modified curriculum commensurate with his/her academic ability.

REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITIES continued

- The regular classroom teacher should provide each LD student with an individualized grading criterion. This grading criterion should be reflective of the student's academic ability and listed in the student's current individualized educational plan (IEP).

- The regular classroom teacher should provide each LD student with the same academic/social opportunities as their nondisabled peers in a way that is commensurate with their ability.

- The regular classroom teacher should provide the resource room teacher with on-going communication as to the status of each LD student's progress. This communication can be as often as daily but not longer than a three week rotation.

APPENDIX G

COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT

COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH TO TRANSITIONING
FOR
JUNIOR HIGH LD STUDENTS REENTERING THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

Check one Yes	No		
			READINESS
☐	☐	R - 1	The student is able to get to class on time with all necessary materials and prepared to work.
☐	☐	R - 2	The student is able to pay attention during instructional presentations.
☐	☐	R - 3	The student is able to perform classroom work commensurate to his/her ability.
☐	☐	R - 4	The student is able to demonstrate an understanding of correct classroom behavior (e.g., raising hand, staying in seat, and not talking out of turn).
☐	☐	R - 5	The student is able to react positively to comments from teachers and peers.
			BEHAVIOR
☐	☐	B - 1	The student is able to work cooperatively with other students.
☐	☐	B - 2	The student is able to follow regular classroom rules and regulations.
☐	☐	B - 3	The student is able to seek help from the teacher when unclear about what is required from an assignment.
			INSTRUCTIONAL
☐	☐	I - 1	The student is able to manipulate any particular instructional equipment in the classroom.
☐	☐	I - 2	The student is able to copy information off the chalkboard, from an overhead screen, and charts.
☐	☐	I - 3	The student is able to understand the language and terminology used for class instruction and discipline.
☐	☐	I - 4	The student is able to record assignments in a notebook accurately and in an organized manner.

COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT continued

ACADEMICS/ASSIGNMENTS

Check one Yes	No		
☐	☐	A-1	The student is able to read and write at a fifth grade level or above.
☐	☐	A-2	The student is able to do math calculations for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
☐	☐	A-3	The student is able to write simple sentences with subject and verb agreement.
☐	☐	A-4	The student is able to write cursive/manuscript legibly.
☐	☐	A-5	The student is able to make a simple book report.
☐	☐	A-6	The student is able to work independently.
☐	☐	A-7	The student is able to give oral presentations.
☐	☐	A-8	The student is able to use the library and its reference materials adequately.
☐	☐	A-9	The student is able to use the dictionary adequately.
☐	☐	A-10	The student is able to complete homework assignments commensurate with ability and on time.
☐	☐	A-11	The student is able to participate in class discussion.
☐	☐	A-12	The student is able to take tests independently.

Additional academic/behavioral information:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If any of the above competencies are checked "No," list the steps that will be taken to compensate for each negative area.

APPENDIX H

MODIFIED RESOURCE ROOM SCHEDULE

MODIFIED RESOURCE ROOM SCHEDULE

By modifying the resource room's environment to emulate that of the regular classroom the learning disabled (LD) student will develop the prerequisite skills needed to survive the transition process.

Four weeks before each LD student enters the transition process the following modified resource room schedule will be implemented:

- The student will be required to arrive to class on time with the necessary materials.
- The student will start receiving assignments verbally and he/she will also be required to copy them from the chalkboard.
- The student will start receiving instructional presentation from an overhead screen.
- The student will be required to work independently and for longer periods of time.
- The student will be required to seek teacher assistance when he/she is unclear about an assignment, task, or experiencing a problem in class.
- The student will start using regular classroom textbook, materials, and worksheets.
- The student will start receiving one homework assignment (for each regular class/subject) the first week, two the second week, three the third week, and four the fourth week. This procedure will shift personal responsibility to the student and help prepare the student for the requirements of the regular classroom. All homework assignments will be commensurate with the student's academic ability.
- The student will start assisting the resource room teacher when other resource students need assistance with difficult academics.

APPENDIX I

STUDENT PROFILE

JUNIOR HIGH STUDENT PROFILE
FOR
LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS REENTERING THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

Regular Classroom Teacher_____

Resource Room Teacher_____

Student_____ Grade_____

Transition/Mainstream Date:_____Full Time_____Part Time_____

If Part Time: Percentage of day in the MAINSTREAM:_____

Percentage of day in the RESOURCE ROOM:_____

THE FOLLOWING [CRITERIA] WAS USED IN DETERMINING THE READINESS FOR_____TO TRANSITION INTO_____

Student's Name Regular Classroom Subject

STUDENT'S ACADEMIC CHARACTERISTICS

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

STUDENT'S BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX J

REGULAR CLASSROOM MODIFICATION

POSSIBLE REGULAR CLASSROOM MODIFICATIONS
TO
ACCOMMODATE LEARNING DISABLED

I. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

- Arrange chairs and tables so learning disabled (LD) students do not go unnoticed.
- Use workstations and learning centers.
- Seat LD students close to the teacher.
- Have LD students follow an established daily routine.
- Record Daily/Weekly assignments on the chalkboard.
- Provide peer-tutoring for LD students when necessary.
- Assign LD students to a daily classroom chore.

II. TEACHING APPROACH

- Use video recorders to tape instructional presentations for students to review later. Nondisabled students can also use the video tapes for review.
- Use concrete examples in presentations.
- Use visual aids and hands-on activities/examples.
- Present instructional information to match student's learning styles.
- Be consistent in reviewing material and concepts.
- Highlight important facts for recalling later.
- Present instructional lessons in small units.
- Provide students with a written summary of verbal presentations.

III. STUDENT INSTRUCTION/MATERIALS

- Present written material in student terms/vocabulary.
- Limit the number of items and questions on worksheets.
- Use sequencing to build on already learned concepts.
- Allow student to use learning aids (e.g., calculators, fact sheets, vocabulary definitions, notes).
- Ask questions in the same order they are found in the text.
- List pages where questions are located.
- Teach students to use the book's Table of Contents, Index, and Glossary for information.

IV. LEARNING STRATEGIES

- Encourage students to keep a daily journal.
- Enable the students to use oral presentations.
- Allow students to present assignments using a variety of methods (e.g., special projects, pictures, designs, models, drawings).

MODIFICATIONS continued

IV. LEARNING STRATEGIES continued

- Allow the students to use technology if available.
- Provide the students with reading materials on cassette.

V. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

- Use student contracts for academics and behavior.
- Use an established classroom routine.
- List your academic and behavioral expectations somewhere in the classroom.
- Provide students with a chance to earn "choice time."
- Provide immediate feedback for positive responses and behavior.

VI. TEST CONSTRUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION

- Allow students more time when taking exams and completing assignments.
- Test what is taught.
- State directions in clear and simple terms.
- Provide student examples.
- Allow students to write on test booklets or worksheets.
- Use short exams.
- Read the directions to the students.
- Construct individual tests in only one style (e.g., multiple choice, true or false, fill-in-the-blank, etc.).
- Color code areas and items of importance.

APPENDIX K

DAILY EVALUATION CARD

DAILY EVALUATION CARD

Name_____ Subject_____ Period_____

Date _____ Current Grade _____ Grade Level_____

Regular Classroom Teacher_____

Resource Room Teacher: _____

_____
Parent Signature/Date

CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY AND INITIAL AT RIGHT

HIGH ← LOW

ARRIVES TO CLASS ON TIME	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	[0[ ]
BRINGS MATERIALS	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	[2[	]1[	]0[ ]
HOMEWORK COMPLETED	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	]0[ ]
IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT/S	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	]0[ ]
ATTITUDE	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	]0[ ]
BEHAVIOR	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	]0[ ]
GROUP WORK	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	]0[ ]

THIS FORM IS SENT HOME TO THE PARENTS EACH WEEK FOR THEM TO REVIEW, SIGN, AND RETURN. **COMMENTS:**

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX L

WEEKLY EVALUATION CARD

WEEKLY EVALUATION CARD

Name_____ Subject_____ Period_____

Date _____ Current Grade _____ Grade Level_____

Regular Classroom Teacher_____

Resource Room Teacher: _____

_____
Parent Signature/Date

CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY AND INITIAL AT RIGHT

HIGH ← LOW

ARRIVES TO CLASS ON TIME	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	[0[ ]
BRINGS MATERIALS	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	[2[	]1[	]0[ ]
HOMEWORK COMPLETED	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	]0[ ]
IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT/S	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	]0[ ]
ATTITUDE	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	]0[ ]
BEHAVIOR	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	]0[ ]
GROUP WORK	10[	]9[	]8[	]7[	]6[	]5[	]4[	]3[	]2[	]1[	]0[ ]

THIS FORM IS SENT HOME TO THE PARENTS EACH WEEK FOR THEM TO REVIEW, SIGN, AND RETURN. **COMMENTS:**

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX M

SPECIAL IEP INVITATION

A SPECIAL "IEP" INVITATION

Teacher:_____

Student:_____

Date:_____

On_____there will be a staffing to discuss the academic and behavioral needs for the above student. Any ideas, thoughts, and concerns you have regarding intervention will be appreciated. As always, the multidisciplinary team (MDT) values your professional experience and input. I am looking forward to working with you in making education more rewarding.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX N

DEFINITIONS: TRANSITION PROCEDURE, FORMS, AND PROCESSES

DEFINITIONS: TRANSITION/MAINSTREAMING

TRANSITION PROCEDURES: These procedures can be of assistance to each student's multidisciplinary team with an appropriate criterion for determining the student's least restrictive environment. The competency-based assessment can be used as a guideline for needed competencies when students transition out of the resource room. The competency-based assessment can also serve as a standard for validating a student's progress each year.

IEP INVITATION: This invitation will be sent to each regular classroom teacher at the junior high level before each meeting related to individualized educational planning (IEP). This is a personal invitation from the resource room teacher to the regular classroom teacher/s letting them know that their experience, knowledge, and professionalism is valued and needed at all IEP staffings.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS FLOWCHART: This flowchart is designed to assist the regular classroom teachers with their understanding of the communication process for students in the transition or mainstream process. On the backside of the flowchart there is a detailed explanation for each step.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES: These responsibilities serve as guidelines to ensure that each student's transition or mainstream placement is successful. If needed, they can be modified for individual student consideration. However, any modifications should be a combined effort between the regular classroom teacher and the resource room teacher.

COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH TO TRANSITIONING AND MAINSTREAMING: The competency-based assessment identifies a student's readiness qualities, behavioral/social qualities, instructional qualities, and academic qualities. These items are important because they outline the necessary qualities needed in each student to ensure a successful transition back into the regular classroom. If, at the time of transitioning or mainstreaming, any of the competencies are checked "No," that competency must have a written plan to compensate for the negative marking.

MODIFIED RESOURCE ROOM SCHEDULE: This modified resource room schedule will be followed by each student four weeks before entering the transition process. The modified schedule is designed to lessen the initial discomfort a student may have upon reentering the regular classroom.

STUDENT PROFILE: The student profile is designed to provide the regular classroom teacher with a clear understanding of the transitioned student's academic and behavioral characteristics. The profile will also provide the regular classroom teacher with important information about the percentage of time the student will be in the resource room and the regular classroom.

POSSIBLE REGULAR CLASSROOM MODIFICATIONS: This list provides the regular classroom teacher with possible modifications to implement within their classroom. The suggestions address the following areas: (1) classroom environment, (2) teaching approach, (3)student instruction/materials, (4) learning strategies, (5) classroom management, and (6) test construction and administration. Regular classroom teachers are encouraged to ask the resource room teacher for assistance with any of these aforementioned possible modifications.

DAILY AND WEEKLY EVALUATION CARDS: After each core academic class period the transitioned student will have the regular classroom teacher fill out a daily evaluation card for all areas that apply during that class period. After the teacher fills out the evaluation card it will be returned to the student. It is the student's responsibility to turn it in to the resource room teacher before the end of the school day. The transitioned student will remain on the "Daily Evaluation Card" until receiving "9" or higher five consecutive days in a row. Following five consecutive days of 9's or higher the transitioned student starts the "Weekly Evaluation Card." The "Weekly Evaluation Card" is filled out on Thursday each week and returned to the resource room teacher. Having the "Weekly Evaluation Card" filled out on Thursday will allow time for the resource room teacher to prepare an assignment for the student to complete over the weekend. If the transitioned student should become negligent in regular classroom responsibilities the "Daily Evaluation Card" routine starts over.

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